

**THE SELF-ACTUALIZATION OF JONAS IN *THE GIVER* NOVEL BY LOUIS  
LOWRY(1993): A HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH**



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# THE SELF-ACTUALIZATION OF JONAS IN THE GIVER(1993) NOVEL BY LOIS LOWRY: HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

## Abstrak

Penelitian ini tentang aktualisasi diri dari Jonas yang terjadi pada novel *The Giver* (1993) karya Lois Lowry yang mana analisisnya menggunakan pendekatan humanistik psikologi. Ada tiga masalah yang di formulasikan dalam analisa penelitian ini. Masalah pertama adalah tentang deskripsi karakter Jonas dalam novel. Masalah kedua adalah jenis aktualisasi diri apa sajakah yang Jonas refleksikan dalam novel *The Giver*. Masalah ketiga adalah bagaimana cara Jonas merefleksikan aktualisasi diri dalam novel *The Giver*. Penelitian ini termasuk dalam penelitian kualitatif. Sumber utama data penelitian ini adalah Novel *The Giver* karya Lois Lowry, sementara data kedua penelitian ini adalah sumber lain yang berhubungan dengan penelitian ini seperti : sumber data virtual dan media cetak yang mendukung penelitian ini. Peneliti menarik tiga kesimpulan dalam penelitian ini. Pertama, penggambaran karakter Jonas berhubungan dengan aktualisasi dirinya. Kedua, proses pengaktualisasian Jonas di kembangkan oleh cara dia mempelajari tentang keutuhan manusia atau kebutuhan hirarki manusia itu sendiri. Ketiga, Jonas mampu mengaktualisasikan diri dari pelepasan diri dari komunitas.

*Kata kunci: Kebutuhan, Aktualisasi, Humanistik psikologi.*

## Abstract

This study is about The Self-actualization of Jonas in *The Giver* novel (1993), which is analyzed by using Humanistic Psychological approach. There are three problems formulated in this undergraduate research paper that the writer wants to analyze. The first problem is about what are the descriptions of Jonas' character in the novel. The second problem is about what kind of self-actualization reflected by Jonas in *The Giver* novel. The Third problem is about how Jonas' self-actualization reflected in *The Giver* novel. This research belongs to qualitative research. The primary data of this research is *The Giver* novel by Lois Lowry, while the secondary data of this research is other sources related to the study, such as: virtual sources and other printed materials that support this research. The researcher draws three conclusions in this research. First, Jonas characterized are related with his actualization. Second, the actualizing process that personality developments. Third, Jonas can actualize with his realizing from the community.

*Keywords: Needs, actualization, humanistic psychology.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A need is a thing that is necessary for an organism to maintain their life. Maslow (1943:375) stated that people are motivated to achieve individual needs. One needs to deal with other needs. The humans are fated born inherently with a need that grows in our behavior to satisfy lower level deficit needs before progressing on to meet higher level growth needs. One of the supporting factors a need is inner psychic, which leads the individual has thought, feelings, and emotions with the optimistic look at human nature. It can emphasize the self and the fulfillment of a

person's unique potential as the forefront of all human development to reach self-actualization.

As social beings, most important things come into their essential being is how to improve the quality of life for a track human being of their choice. The power beyond our control is our drive to create love and praise for the social standards of the individual.

A need has been the important position in our life. It can be seen in literary work mainly in the novel. One of the novels that show the fact of signing a need is *The Giver* that is actualization needs. Lois Lowry wrote "The Giver" novel. Lois Lowry is American novelist born on March 20, 1937.

In *The Giver* novels, Jonas is the protagonist who lived with his parents and his sister. Every kid in the society celebrates the ceremony of twelve, where the people in the society gathered, every twelve have chosen a job the increase in the age in December. The Committee of Elders has chosen Jonas as the next Receiver of Memory. This job is very significant to the society because only one receiver in the residential section and he accepts to pick up complete memories from the yesteryear. It implies he suffers a significant duty on his shoulders. This memory has kept from society because they did not want to suffer from the memories. It brought pain to them. Jonas had no mind of what task of a new Receiver. (*The Giver*, 1993)

The novel story takes place in a society that lives in a perfect world, or many people say dystopian society. There is no fighting, crime, inequality, injustice, poverty, unemployment, divorce. The Committee of Elders provided all fulfillments for every member of the community. The members are determined, what they should do, who their partner that must adopt the children. Many things that have been eliminated are: at twelve, every member of the society is given a choice task based on their strengths and interests. The Committee of Elders has arranged every faction thus everyone lives in feasibility and stability. Everyone has used the precise language for conversation and a positive perspective to act in a right way. The residential district is unjustifiable and monotonous those are colorless and fade. Respect is not our mind but controlled by the rules. (*The Giver*, 1993)

Based on the plot of the story in *The Giver* novel, there are many reasons the researcher involved in analyzing this novel. First, because in the story on *The Giver* novel gives the great impression of the writer it has good moral values for the

reader. The second, *The Giver* has a unique and inspirational story. The inspiration can analyze based on the confrontation in the growth of personality from the different social background. Third, *The Giver* novel delineates personality values in real life. The Giver is the delineation of the actualizing personality. The reader sees the actualizing from Jonas in the society related to the memory of the past before they prevail.

The researcher uses Humanistic Psychological approach to analyze this novel because the story of the novel tells about the appointment Self-actualization entitled “The Self-Actualization of Jonas in *The Giver* Novel by Lois Lowry (1993) Humanistic Psychological Study”. The writer adopts the humanistic psychology theories of Abraham Maslow.

## **2. METHOD**

The researcher is divided into five parts, namely type of study, type of data and collecting data, data validity and technique of analyzing data. The type of study is descriptive qualitative. The primary source comes from the novel itself and second sources are article, journal, dictionary and the other resources that related to the issue. This research will apply library research and comprehension technique as the method. Data validity here uses triangulation method. Technique of data analysis is document analysis. Researcher uses content analysis by using humanistic psychology perspective in analysis the data.

## **3. FINDING AND DISSCUSION**

### **3.1 Finding**

#### **3.1.1 Humanistic psychology analysis on Jonas's characteristics**

##### **1) Obedient**

Jonas is obedient. When well trained, and Jonas follows The Giver’s orders. When the plane came over, the Society was asked to put their bicycles downward. It was seen on the page:

*“Then all the citizens had been ordered to go into the nearest building and stayed there. at once, the rasping voice through the speakers had said “LEAVE YOUR BICYCLES WHERE THEY ARE., obediently Jonas had dropped his bike its sides on the path behind his family’s dwelling (The Giver, p. 2)*

##### **2) Diligent**

Jonas is diligent. He is depicted as a boy who always studies and likes to prepare the materials for his school.

One of prove is: *"He forced himself to arrange his papers and try to study a little before the evening meal"* (*The Giver*, p 32).

### 3) Curious

Jonas is curious. When he wanted to take the apple that was changing color. Jonas was playing catch on the playground with an apple, and he noticed that it was changing color. So what he did was that he grabbed and examined it.

Jonas can see when people are uncomfortable or need help and is considerate in offering it. When he first meets The Giver, and the man says of his memories. He said:

*"I am so weighted with them,"* (*The Giver*, p. 78)

Jonas feels a terrible concern for the man.

When The Giver is the burning pain, Jonas asks him to share it:

*"If you gave this of it to me, maybe your pain would be less,"* he says. (*The Giver*, p. 107)

### 4) Intelligence

Jonas is intelligence. He realizes that if his instructions tell him he can lay, the surrounding adults may lie to him and that he will never know if they do because they do not have to answer him truthfully. After learning about colors, and how they were done away with when the society went to Sameness, that happen when The Giver shrugged:

*"Our people made that choice, the choice to go to Sameness. Before my time, before the earlier time, back and back and back."* (*The Giver*, p. 95).

#### 3.1.2 The kind self-actualization aspects in *The Giver* novel

##### 1) Acceptance and Realism

After receiving the painful warfare memory where Jonas hear the thud of cannons overwhelmed by pain that makes him is to become developed.

*... Although he had through the memories learned about the pain of loss and loneliness, now he counted, to understand of solitude and its joy."* (*The Giver*, p.122)

##### 2) Focus on the problem outside themselves

As the Receiver, Jonas has a challenge for himself to the deep understanding the somewhat sameness separating by The Elder of The Community. By his wisdom,



he must choose and find the way to escaping his want to be a human being with Gabe. It seen when:

"That night, Jonas was forced to flee. He left the dwelling shortly after the sky became dark and the community still. It was dangerous because some of the work crews were still about, but he moved stealthily and silently, staying in the shadows, making his way past the darkened dwellings and the empty Central Plaza, toward the river.

3) Spontaneity

In someday, Jonas learns memory names of colors and how he saw them as The Giver. Jonas and The Giver talking about what are will Jonas choose toy colors. Jonas answered "sameness". The Giver nodded:

*"But now that I can see colors, at least sometimes. I was thinking: what if we could hold up things that were bright red, or bright yellow and lie could choose' Instead of the Sameness."(The Giver, p. 98)*

4) The sense of detachment and the need for privacy

How Jonas was so sure to flee from the society confirmed that he valued independence correctly than his existence a comfortable life without privacy.

Go," The Giver would tell him tensely. "I am in pain today. Come back tomorrow."

*"On those days, worried and disappointed, Jonas would walk alone beside the river. The paths were empty of people except for the few Delivery Crews and Landscape Workers here and there. Small children were all at the Childcare Center after school, and the older ones busy with volunteer hours or training". (The Giver, p. 80-81)*

5) Continued Freshness of Appreciation

*"He felt, surprisingly, no fear, nor any regret at leaving the community. But he felt too deep sadness that he had left his closest friend. He knew that in the danger of his escape, he must be utterly silent; but with his heart and mind..."(The Giver. P 163)*

Personality development taken when a decision made has a purpose to gain more satisfaction than previous satisfaction.

6) Peak Experiences

As he reached the top of a hill, something happened. He seems warmer because his feelings are more balance.

*Memories of joy flooded through him. (The Giver, p. 177) "If he had stayed within the community, he would not be (starving). It was as simple as that. Once he had the yearned-for choice. Then, when he had had a choice, he had made the wrong one: the choice to leave.(The Giver p.172)*

Jonas reflected how much his deficiency needs are essential for him, but he still could have freedom and self-actualize. It is also called the peak experience when Jonas had given the different presence and sense moments of joys upon it.

### 3.1.3 Jonas Reflection on the Self-actualization

The struggle he did to fulfill his needs according to his new comprehension as The Receiver was through overcoming conflicts that occurred through the refine of hiding out need's fulfillment.

#### 1)Physiological/Basic Needs

Jonas included, he did not see other things as necessary as the physiological needs, including food, clothes, and shelters. These basic needs are having provided by the district, but sometimes Jonas' consciousness alert him to his own needs.

##### a) Food

People from the Food Delivery Department distributed the food in the community every day, so they were always available on each mealtime, in either the family units or school, or other places.

*"The boy stared at him. "Water," he begged again..." (The Giver, p. 119)*

##### b) Clothes

*"...If everything is the same, then there aren't any choices! I want to wake up in the morning and decide things! A blue tunic or a red one?... "But now I can see colors, at least sometimes, I was thinking: what if we could hold up things that were bright red... (The Giver, p. 98)*

Jonas came to the point of frustration because he chose way because what the community provided was colorless clothes. Jonas faced a set of alternatives raised from his new consciousness, and it frustrated him.

#### 2)Safety Needs

*"Almost every citizen in the community had dark eyes..." (The Giver, p. 20)*

Jonas does not enjoy differences either; he does not like it when his sister points out his pale eyes which one is different with the dark eyes of the community.

Jonas did not think that he was unsafe in the community where everything was hard to order, and the choices were to specifically made Jonas to believed, that he must not break the rules to keep himself safe, as quoted:

*"... Jonas has, like all of us, committed minor transgressions. (...) We expect that. We hoped, also, that he would present himself promptly for chastisement, and he has always done so." (The Giver, p. 62)*

This also showed that appeared once again, Jonas's need was not a hundred percent satisfied, even though fulfilled enough to bring the consciousness of the higher needs.

### 3) Belongingness and love needs

When he trained as The Receiver, Jonas saw a different family. He learned that it was love that radiated the warm and comfortable atmosphere. Jonas faced an alternative way of a family concept. The family units in his community raised children in proper ways to create an ideal society as quoted:

*"Each such error reflected negatively on his parent's guidance and infringed on the community sense of order and success." (The Giver, p. 45)*

The families in his saw in the memories were people who live together by a fraternal bond and took cared each other because of love. Both choice situations have their own goals, which are necessary, but, choosing one of them means to give up the other that can cause the sense of conflict not settled.

### 4) Esteem needs

When Jonas was chosen as The Receiver of Memories, he felt consider he had the chance to become something. Jonas felt that if he only experiences sweet memories, then he did not adequately function as a Receiver. Jonas felt urged taking the burden of pain, especially when he found out that the former Receiver selected ten years ago, did not do her job

Jonas, at first, keep himself on the step earlier, he still obeyed the rules when he suffered from great pain because of the training, he chose not

to take any medicine for it was forbidden in his rules. Jonas was continued being The Receiver.

*“Jonas did not want to go back. He didn’t want the memories, didn’t want the honor, didn’t want the wisdom, didn’t want the pain... (The Giver, p 121)*

*“...And he, Jonas, would never have done it –never have requested release, no matter how difficult his training became. The Giver needed a successor, and he had been chosen.” (The Giver, p.143)*

#### 5) Self-Actualization

Jonas, who once was a very obedient boy, broke his record and violated so many rules for the sake of his righteousness. Jonas learned extensive of the satisfiers are lacking in quality. However, he could still move on to the higher-level set of needs even though he had to face difficulties to satisfy his needs because he felt that the satisfiers are not compatible with how he wished them to be.

## 4. CLOSING

Based on above the analysis of self-actualization Jonas in The Giver(1993) novel, the researcher found the basics of being needs, which are: 1) Jonas develop his awareness of hierarchy needs. He was learned what is he must realize his consciousness as the realistic perception that means is motivation. 2) Jonas has reflected his motivation as personal responsibility to reach self-actualization in the reveal of kind of actualization, that is: Acceptance and realism, focus on problem outside themselves, spontaneity, sense of detachment and the need for privacy, continued freshness of appreciation, peak experiences, 3) Finally Jonas stops relying on the society and gain his freedom to act. Jonas' success in reaching the highest needs in the hierarchy proves he has gone through personal development. He has transcended his deficiency needs becomes independent. He relies on his own decision and strives towards the growth values, and he does not put his ego first and becomes a fully functioning human being.

On this research, the novel *The Giver* is one of famous literary work and the message in it tells about actualizing case. So, literature teacher able to use the topic actualizing as a media to teach human being in personality development. Students can learn and get more information about literature and the social history of personality development and its human being.

Based on the conclusion above the researcher suggests to other researcher supposed to be able to make new and useful research related to the same literary work or others with the same approach or another approach. The other researcher can use another social approach such as sociological, Marxism, approach to finding the historical background of *The Giver* novel. The researcher also able to use the psychological approach such as behaviorism, or individual psychological approach to analyze the characters within the novel.

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